

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14

MC-02 ACDA-19 DRC-01 EB-11 COME-00 STR-08 /158 W

----- 120521

P R 161550Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2760

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0238

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, NL, BEXP

SUBJ: GON PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT FIGHTER PLANE:

AMBASSADOR'S LUNCH FOR MINISTER OF DEFENSE VREDELING

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR TOOK UP REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR DUTCH F-104S DIRECTLY WITH DEFENSE MINISTER VREDELING AT PRIVATE MEETING, ALSO ATTENDED BY THOMAS JONES, PRES OF NORTHROP, EMPHASIZING MILITARY, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATIONS FAVORING SELECTION OF US PRODUCT. VREDELING ARTICULATED HIS PERSONAL CONCERN AS A EUROPEANIST THAT THE DUTCH REPLACEMENT COMMITMENT BE USED TO ADVANCE EUROPE'S CAPACITY TO PRODUCE AIRCRAFT, BUT HE ALSO ADMITTED TO HEAVY FRENCH PRESSURE. HE INDICATED DECISION WILL NOT BE REACHED BEFORE MARCH. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS MATTER DURING INTERIM AND MAY CALL ON DEPT AND DEFENSE FOR EXTRA SUPPORT DEPENDING ON OUR ANALYSIS OF
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FEEDBACK FROM DEFMINISTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE READY TO

BUY AMERICAN. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF DEFENSE VREDELING LUNCHEONED JAN 15 WITH THOMAS JONES, PRESIDENT OF NORTHROP, AND ME AT RESIDENCE. I LIMITED THE MEETING TO THE THREE OF US IN ORDER THAT WE COULD COME QUICKLY TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEM OF A REPLACEMENT FOR THE DUTCH F-104S.

3. THE GIST OF MY EXPOSITION WAS AS FOLLOWS: FIRST, THE UNITAES IS INTERESTED IN NATO OBTAINING THE BEST POSSIBLE PLANES FOR THE SPECIALIZED MISSIONS OF ITS COMPONENT AIR FORCES. SECOND, THE ADMINISTRATION MUST DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO SEE THAT THE JACKSON-NUNN AMENDMENT IS SATISFIED, AND TO THIS END WE HAD DETERMINED THAT PURCHASE OF AN AMERICAN PLANE WOULD SATISFY THE DUTCH PORTION OF BURDEN-SHARING FOR SOME TIME TO COME. THIRD, WE CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE THE TRADITIONAL CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS EXISTED BETWEEN THE US AND DUTCH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE TRAINING, LOGISTICS, MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY FIELDS.

4. I MADE CLEAR THAT WHILE THE US WAS NOT PRESSING ANY ONE INDIVIDUAL AIRCRAFT, IT WAS A FACT, CONFIRMED BY THE DUTCH AIR FORCE, THAT THE COBRA WAS SUPERIOR TO ANY EUROPEAN COMPETITOR. FOR THIS REASON I HAD ASKED MR. JONES TO ATTEND OUR LUNCHEON IN ORDER THAT HE COULD REVIEW IN DETAIL THE COBRA'S CAPABILITIES, EXPLAIN THE INDUSTRIAL OFFSET AGREEMENTS WHICH WOULD SEE AT LEAST 40 PERCENT OF THE PURCHASE PRICE SPENT IN HOLLAND, AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS WHICH THE MINISTER MIGHT HAVE.

5. JONES DESCRIBED IN DETAIL THE ORIGIN OF THE PLANE, EMPHASIZING THAT IT WAS BUILT TO EUROPEAN SPECIFICATIONS ARRIVED AT BY EUROPEANS. HE SHOWED PHOTOS AND DESCRIBED PRESENT STATUS OF PROTOTYPE CONFIRMING THAT THE MAIDEN FLIGHT WILL TAKE PLACE IN APRIL. JONES ALSO REVIEWED EXCELLENT PROGRESS OF J 101 ENGINE QUALIFICATION PROGRAM. HE EXPLAINED THAT WHILE NORTHROP HAD AN INTEREST IN THE FOKKER COMPANY WHICH WOULD GET A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION

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OF THE CONTRACT, NORTHROP'S INTEREST IN FOKKER WAS SMALL WHICH WAS IN KEEPING WITH NORTHROP'S POLICY OF NEVER HAVING A MAJORITY INTEREST IN ANY FOREIGN CORPORATION.

6. THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE SAID HE APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH US. HE SPOKE OF HIS CONCERN THAT IF HE SELECTED AN AMERICAN PLANE HE WOULD ANTAGONIZE THE FRENCH, AND IF HE SELECTED A FRENCH PLANE HE WOULD ANTAGONIZE THE AMERICANS. I

REPLIED THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD NOT BE IN THE LEAST CONCERNED WITH A DUTCH SELECTION OF A NON-AMERICAN PLANE PROVIDED THAT THE OTHER PLANE WAS SUPERIOR TO OURS. THIS HOWEVER IS JUST NOT THE FACT, FOR THE COBRA AND OTHER AMERICAN PROTOTYPES ARE A NEW GENERATION AIRCRAFT WHEREAS THE MIRAGE WHICH THE FRENCH ARE TRYING TO SELL IS THE END OF A LINE.

7. VREDELING KEPT RETURNING TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF A NON-EUROPEAN PURCHASE. ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED HE WAS UNDER SOME CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM THE FRENCH HIS RELUCTANCE TO OPT FOR A US PLANE APPEARS MOTIVATED BY HIS BELIEF THAT THE DUTCH REPLACEMENT COMMITMENT CAN BE USED TO HELP EUROPE DEVELOP ITS OWN AIRPLANE CAPACITY. TO THIS BOTH JONES AND I POINTED OUT THE BENEFITS THAT WOULD FLOW TO HOLLAND AND FOKKER FROM SELECTION OF THE COBRA, BUT VREDELING SEEMED MORE INTERESTED IN BEFITTING EUROPE FROM THE PURCHASE THAN IN BENEFITTING THE NETHERLANDS.

8. CONVERSATION CONTINUED AT BRISK PACE FOR THE HOUR AND A HALF OF OUR AMIABLE MEETING BUT BROKE NO NEW GROUND. IF THE AMERICAN PLANE IS TO BE SOLD, WE WILL HAVE TO SUPPLY VREDELING WITH A GOOD ANSWER TO HIS RHETORICAL QUESTION, QUOTE WHAT WOULD I TELL MY FRENCH COLLEAGUE IF I ORDER THE AMERICAN PLANE? UNQUOTE HIS MIND IS NOT MADE UP, HOWEVER. HE IS MOST FORTHRIGHT IN ARTICULATING HIS POLITICAL PROBLEM AND APPEARED INTERESTED IN OUR EXPOSITIONS. HE SAID NO DECISION WILL BE REACHED BEFORE MARCH AND EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO CONTINUE OUR DIALOGUE WHICH WE WILL PURSUE.

9. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE TOP
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LEVELS OF THE USG (AS RECOMMENDED IN THE HAGUE 5633 AND BRUSSELS 227) TO USE IN OVERCOMING VREDELING'S HESITANCY TO FOLLOW HIS MILITARY ADVISERS AND BUY AMERICAN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, JET AIRCRAFT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974THEHA00238
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740137/aaaabinb.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <28 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GON PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT FIGHTER PLANE: AMBASSADOR'S LUNCH FOR MINISTER OF DEFENSE VREDELING
TAGS: MASS, MARR, BEXP, NL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005